

Message Text

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TAGS: PARM, TECH, EEC, IAEA, UK

SUBJECT: UK VOLUNTARY SAFEGUARDS OFFER

REF: STATE 152207

1. SUMMARY. INFORMATION READILY AVAILABLE TO US HERE SUGGESTS THAT THE UK IS ADOPTING ESSENTIALLY A WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE REGARDING ITS VOLUNTARY OFFER UNTIL THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE FRENCH CIVIL PROGRAM WILL BE SUBJECTED TO EC SAFEGUARDS IN THE FUTURE IS KNOWN. END SUMMARY.

2. SOURCES IN THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EC) TELL US THAT VERY LITTLE MOVEMENT CAN BE SEEN ON THE PART OF THE BRITISH REGARDING THEIR VOLUNTARY OFFER TO PLACE PEACEFUL NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES UNDER IAEA SAFEGUARDS PURSUANT TO THE NPT. THIS LACK OF MOVEMENT IS BASED ON THE BRITISH DESIRE TO SEE HOW THE EC WILL HANDLE FRANCE ON THE QUESTION OF SAFEGUARDING ITS CIVIL NUCLEAR FACILITIES.

3. THE FRENCH MAINTAIN THAT THEY ALONE MAY DECIDE WHAT CIVIL FACILITIES IN FRANCE ARE SUBJECT TO EURATOM AND/OR IAEA INSPECTION ACTIVITIES. HOWEVER, OUR SOURCES TELL US THAT EC SAFEGUARDS

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OFFICIALS WILL PRESS FOR A CONTINUATION OF THE PRACTICE OF APPLYING

EURATOM SAFEGUARDS TO ALL PEACEFUL NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING THOSE OF ITS NWS MEMBERS. IN DOING SO THEY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY RELY HEAVILY ON THE ARGUMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. IT IS EXPECTED THAT THIS QUESTION WILL BE REFERRED TO THE EC COMMISSION INITIALLY AND LATER TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS FOR RESOLUTION. THERE IS NO INDICATION WHEN THIS MAY OCCUR, ALTHOUGH IT IS BELIEVED IT WILL NOT BE BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

4. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE UK WILL WAIT TO SEE HOW THIS PROBLEM IS RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION AND THE COUNCIL BEFORE REACHING ANY CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE MODE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS OFFER TO THE IAEA. THE UK HAS INDICATED THAT IT MAY ALSO WAIT FOR RATIFICATION OF THE EC-IAEA SAFEGUARDS VERIFICATION AGREEMENT BY THE SEVEN NNWS MEMBERS OF THE EC (IN THIS CONNECTION, OUR COMMISSION SOURCES EXPECT THAT FINAL RATIFICATION WILL NOT OCCUR FOR ONE TO ONE AND ONE-HALF YEARS). THEREFORE IT APPEARS FROM INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US HERE THAT THE BRITISH ARE NOT PLANNING ANY MOVE AT THE PRESENT TIME.

5. COMMENT: THE FRENCH POSITION THAT THEY ALONE HAVE THE RIGHT TO SELECT WHAT FACILITIES ARE SUBJECT TO INSPECTION IS APPARENTLY BASED ON THE INTERNAL EC UNDERSTANDING REACHED AT THE TIME THE EC COMMISSION'S MANDATE WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1971 FOR NEGOTIATING THE EC-IAEA SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT. AT THAT TIME, THE COMMISSION (FERNAND SPAAK, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ENERGY AND SAFEGUARDS) LODGED A RESERVATION WITH RESPECT TO THE UNDERSTANDING AFTER FRANCE DECLINED TO DECLARE ITS INTENTIONS, UNDER THAT UNDERSTANDING, TO PLACE ALL ITS CIVIL PROGRAM UNDER EURATOM SAFEGUARDS. SPAAK WANTED ASSURANCES THAT THE STATUS QUO WOULD BE MAINTAINED IN FRANCE, BUT FRANCE WOULD NOT INDICATE ITS INTENTIONS ON THIS POINT.

6. BECAUSE OF FACATIONS, THE COMMISSION AND UK PER REP SOURCES CONTACTED ON THIS MATTER DO NOT CONSTITUTE THE "FIRST TEAM" ON SAFEGUARDS POLICY ISSUES. THE MISSION WILL EXPLORE THE MATTER FURTHER IN SEPTEMBER, WHEN THE MORE SENIOR AND KNOWLEDGEABLE OFFICIALS RETURN, IF THIS WOULD BE USEFUL.
END COMMENT. HARTMAN

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